Rashi on Esther
רש"י על אסתר
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Rashi on Esther

Chapter 1

Verse 1

It was in the days of Achashveirosh. He was the king of Persia 1 The Persians conquered the Babylonians, and Achashveirosh succeeded Koresh to the Persian throne in the year 3392. who reigned in place of Koresh 2 There were other Persian kings with the name "Achashveirosh," therefore Rashi identifies which "Achashveirosh" he was. (Mizrachi) at the end of the seventy years of the Babylonian exile.
He was [the] Achashveirosh. He was equally wicked from beginning to end. 3 Maseches Megillah 11a. He did not allow the resumption of the building of the Bais Hamikdosh after it had been suspended.
Who reigned. He reigned on his own, and was not of royal seed. 4 Ibid. He was very wealthy and he acquired the throne by distributing his money.
From Hodu to Cush, etc. Who reigned over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces [with the same authority] as he reigned from Hodu 5 India. to Cush, 6 Ethiopia. which are situated alongside one another, 7 Maseches Megillah 11a. and similarly [we explain], "For he ruled over the entire area beyond the [Euphrates] river, from Tiphsach to Gaza," 8 I Melochim 5:4. [meaning] that he ruled over this side of the river, [with the same authority] just as he ruled over Tiphsach to Gaza. 8 Otherwise why mention only these two provinces.

Verse 2

When King Achashveirosh had established himself, etc. When the kingdom was firmly established under his control. 9 I.e., כשבת should not be interpreted literally as meaning "when he sat [on his throne]." Alternatively, Targum renders the literal translation and relates that Achashveirosh had in his possession the throne of King Shlomo. However, he was injured when he tried to sit on it.He had his craftsmen build for him a replica which had just been completed and that is the meaning of "he sat on his throne." Our Rabbis, however, explained it differently in Maseches Megillah. 10 11b, which interpret it as "when Achashveirosh gained his composure." Until now Achashveirosh was afraid that the Jewish exile would finish at the end of seventy years as predicted by Yirmiyahu [29:10]. However, Achashveirosh [mistakenly] calculated that the seventy years had already elapsed and concluded that the Jews would never be redeemed but will remain under his dominion. He celebrated at his feast by using the vessels confiscated from the Bais Hamikdosh.

Verse 3

The nobles. Governors, in the Persian language. 11 Maseches Megillah 12a. Alternatively, people of royal descent. (Ibn Ezra)

Verse 4

[For] many days. He made a feast for them. 12 I.e., "for many days" refers back to "the feast" [v. 3] and not to the exhibition of "the affluence and eminence of his kingdom." [v. 4] (Sifsei Chachomim)

Verse 5

Of the garden. A place where vegetables are sown.
Orchard. Where trees are planted.

Verse 6

[There were] pure white drapes, fine woolen cushions, bluish emerald techeiles wool. He spread out various types of colored fabrics for them as spreads. 13 Maseches Megillah 12a.
Brocaded with strands of linen and mauve, woolen argaman threads. Embroidered with threads of linen and purple; he spread these out for them on rods of silver and columns of marble.
Gold and silver couches. He set [them] up to sit upon for the meal.
On a floor. Floors of green and white, etc. Our Rabbis identified them as types of precious stones. 14 Ibid. According to the apparent meaning of the verse, these were their names.

Verse 7

As for drinking; golden utensils. [The word וְהַשְׁקוֹת means the same] as וּלְהַשְׁקוֹת and to give to drink. 15 Shemos 2:16.
Sundry. Different one from the other, and similarly, "and their customs differ," 16 Below 3:8. and our Rabbis expounded what they expounded. 17 Maseches Megillah 12a. The Rabbis said that these vessels were taken from the Bais Hamikdosh.
And plenty of royal wine. It was abundant. 18 I.e., הרבה = רב. See Rashi in Bamidbar 16:3. And our Rabbis said that he gave each one wine to drink that was older than he. 19 Maseches Megillah 12a.

Verse 8

Proper. Because there are feasts in which they coerce those seated to drink [the contents] of a large vessel, and some can only drink it with difficulty, but here it was "with no coercion." 20 Alternatively, no one was coerced into finishing his drink quickly in order to make his cup available to someone else because there were enough cups for all [השתיה כדת].
Basically instructed. An expression referring to a foundation [יְסוֹד], meaning, so he instituted and commanded.
All his palace officials. All stewards of the feast: the chief baker, the chief butcher and the chief butler.
To satisfy each individual's desire. For each one his desire. 21 Each person was served wine from his native land. (See Maseches Megillah 12a)

Verse 9

Verse 10

On the seventh day. Our Rabbis said 22 Maseches Megillah 12b. that it was on Shabbos. 23 Corresponding to "the seventh day" of the week.

Verse 11

Verse 12

Queen Vashti refused. Our Rabbis said because leprosy broke out on her, 24 Ibid. Vashti did not refuse out of modesty. She was as lewd as her husband and would have attended had she not broken out with leprosy. Another opinion is that the angel Gavriel caused her to grow a tail. so that she should refuse and be executed. Because she would force Jewish girls to disrobe and make them do work on Shabbos, it was decreed upon her to be stripped naked on Shabbos. 25 This punishment was in the form of מדה כנגד מדה, just as she had done, so it was decreed upon her. (Maseches Megillah 12b)
Angered. Because she sent him words of insult. 26 And that is why the king was extremely angered. (Maseches Megillah 11b)

Verse 13

For the king would thus place matters. For such was the king's custom in every judgment, to present the matter "before all who were versed in procedural and legal concerns." 27 The Midrash states that Achashveirosh originally sought the advice of the Sages and asked them to judge Vashti. Realizing that judging Vashti would expose them to great danger, they opted to defer judgment by explaining to Achashveirosh that they were unfit to judge in a capital case. (Maseches Megillah 12b)

Verse 14

Most intimately associated with him. To present his affairs before them were the following: Carshena, Shesar, etc.

Verse 15

Concerning the proper procedure to follow. This refers back to "The king consulted the sages." 28 Above, v. 13.

Verse 16

Has aggrieved. An expression of iniquity 29 .[עָוֹן] From the root עוה. However, according to the Ibn Ezra the root is עות meaning to act perversely.

Verse 17

For the affair of the queen will extend to all women. That she showed contempt for the king, [this will cause] all the women to show contempt for their husbands as well.

Verse 18

The noblewomen in Persia and Media will say, etc. This thing to all the king's ministers. This is an abbreviated verse.
Causing enormous disparagement and rage. And in this matter there is much contempt and wrath. 30 Esther Rabbah 4:8. "Contempt" because she had insulted him, and "wrath" because she had disobeyed him. The Gra explains the difference between the two terms חמה (fury) and קצף (anger). The

latter [קצף] is displayed outwardly for all to see, and the former (;חמה one keeps to himself.

Verse 19

A royal edict. A royal decree of revenge, i.e., that he commanded to execute her. 31 And let it become a law that any woman guilty of a similar offense against her husband shall be executed.
To be recorded in the bylaws of Persia and Media. In the books of the statutes and the customs of the kingdom.
Never to be revoked. This statute from among them; 32 מחוכן is another name for Haman (Maseches Megillah 12b). Haman was concerned that Achashveirosh might reconsider and take back Vashti, leaving him vulnerable to her vengeance. Haman therefore requested that the decree be irrevocable. this should be a statute and a law for anyone who shows contempt for her husband.
That Vashti must never again appear. And therefore she was executed.

Verse 20

Verse 21

Verse 22

And his people’s language be the one spoken. He can compel his wife to learn his language if her native tongue is different. 33 Ibid. 4:12. The purpose for this law was to make wives show respect and subjugation to their husbands.

Chapter 2

Verse 1

He remembered Vashti. Her beauty, and he became sad. 1 He was remorseful having realized that her refusal to appear before him was justified and the decree against her was wrong. Providence, however, had ordained her execution because she had persuaded Achashveirosh to prohibit the restoration of the Bais Hamikdosh which had been destroyed by Nevuchadnetzar, her grandfather.

Verse 2

Verse 3

And let his majesty appoint officials. Since every commissioner is familiar with the beautiful women in his province. 2 Rather than appoint commissioners from Shushan, he should appoint local commissioners in his provinces because they would be more readily able to find the most beautiful women in their own provinces.
Their cosmetics. These are substances that cleanse [the skin], as in, “that shall be purged [ומרק] and rinsed.” 3 Vayikra 6:21. These are

perfumed oils, various ingredients and spices that cleanse and soften the skin. 4 Maseches Megillah 13a.

Verse 4

Verse 5

There was a Yehudite man. Because he was exiled with the exile of Yehudah. 5 Rashi offers this explanation to reconcile the contradiction at the end of this verse where Mordechai is described as a Binyaminite man. Targum renders אִישׁ יְהוּדִי, "a pious Jew." Alternatively, יְהוּד is similar to יִחוּד [=unification], i.e., Mordechai publicly unified God's Name by refusing to bow before Haman, who wore an idolatrous image. (Esther Rabbah 6:2 and see Maseches Megillah 12b-13a) All those who were exiled with the kings of Yehudah were called יְהוּדִים [Yehudites] among the nations, even if they were from another tribe. 6 Maseches Megillah 12b. A Binyaminite man. He was from Binyamin, that is the plain meaning. But our Rabbis expounded what they expounded. 7 Ibid.

Verse 6

Verse 7

As a daughter. Our Rabbis explained, "for a house" [i.e., לְבַת=לְבַיִת, meaning, as a wife. 8 Maseches Megillah 13a. Apparently בת here does not mean [lit.] daughter, because Esther was not his child.

Verse 8

Verse 9

He eagerly delivered her cosmetics. He was more expedient and quicker with bringing her [cosmetics] than with all the others. 9 To avoid eating non-kosher food Esther had Hagai provide her with natural uncooked food. See Maseches Megillah 13a.
Assigned to her. To serve her, and so they would do for all of them; and our Rabbis expounded what they expounded. 10 Ibid. By having seven maidservants Esther was able to know when it was Shabbos. She called each one on a different day of the week and when the one that was assigned for Shabbos would come, she knew it was Shabbos. Another reason for having seven maidservants, one for each day of the week, so that the maidservants for weekdays would not observe her resting on Shabbos and detect that she was Jewish. According to Targum, each maidservant's name corresponded to a specific day's part of creation.
He favored her. I.e., he changed her וַיְשַׁנֶּהָ=שִׁנָּה אוֹתָהּ.

Verse 10

Not to reveal it. So that they should say that she was from an ignoble family and dismiss her, for if they knew that she was of the family of King Shaul, they would keep her. 11 According to Targum, Mordechai feared for Esther's and the Jews' safety.

Verse 11

And what would be done with her. He [Mordechai] was one of two righteous men to whom a hint of salvation was given; Dovid and Mordechai. Dovid as it is stated, "Even the lion and the bear has your servant slain." 12 I Shmuel 17:36. He [Dovid] said [to himself], "this incident did not happen to me only that I should rely on it and do battle with this one [Golyas]." And similarly, Mordechai [said to himself], "It did not happen to this righteous woman that she should be taken to a gentile's bed only that she is destined to rise to save Yisroel." He therefore repeatedly went around to find out what would be her fate. 13 Esther Rabbah 6:6. Accordingly ומה יעשה בה means "and what would be accomplished through her."

Verse 12

Time. Time.

Verse 13

Whatever she requested. Any entertainment and types of music.

Verse 14

To the second harem residence. The second 14 .שֵׁנִי=הַשֵּׁנִי Those who were brought to the king were required to return to the second harem residence.

Verse 15

Verse 16

In the tenth month. The cold season, when one body enjoys [the warmth of] another body. 15 Maseches Megillah 13a. The Holy One Blessed Is He, designated that cold season in order to endear her to him.

Verse 17

More than all the women. 16 Ibid. The married ones; for he also gathered married women.

Verse 18

He waived the colonial taxes. In her honor he released them from the tax that was [levied] upon them. 17 Ibid. 18 Because he did not know Esther's ancestry Achashveirosh tried to the draw the secret from her. He waived the taxes of all the provinces and she still did not tell him. However, once he was apprized of her ancestry he restored the tax; below 10:1. (Gra)
And [he] lavished gifts. He sent them gifts, and everything was in order to entice her, perhaps she would reveal her nationality. 19 Maseches Megillah 13a. But nevertheless,

Verse 19

Verse 20

Esther would not reveal [the identity of] her heritage. Because Mordechai was sitting in the king's gate; he encouraged her and hinted to her about it.

Verse 21

To assault. To give him poison to drink. 20 Ibid. 13b. According to Targum they planned to poison Esther and to murder Achashveirosh with a sword.

Verse 22

The matter was apprehended by Mordechai. For they were discussing their affairs before him in the Tarsian language, and they did not know that Mordechai was familiar with seventy languages, for he was one of those [Sanhedrin] 21 Ibid. Each member of Sanhedrin was familiar with all seventy languages in order to understand and hear direct testimony without the means of a translator. who sat in the Chamber of Hewn Stone [which housed the Great Sanhedrin].

Verse 23

This was inscribed in the book of archives. The favor that Mordechai did for the king. 22 This was recorded in the book of archives of Media and Persia, and referred to in 10:2 below.

Chapter 3

Verse 1

After these events. That this remedy was created as a salvation for Yisroel.
King [Achashveirosh] conferred eminence on Haman. For the Holy One Blessed Is He, creates a remedy for Yisroel's blow before He brings the blow upon them. 1 Maseches Megillah 13b.

Verse 2

Kneeled and prostrated themselves. Because he made himself as a god; 2 Esther Rabbah 7:5. Alternatively, his robes were decorated with idols. (Ibn Ezra) therefore, "but Mordechai would neither kneel nor prostrate himself."

Verse 3

Verse 4

If Mordechai's avowal would be sustained. Who said that he would never prostrate himself because he is a Jew, and was admonished against idolatry. 3 Esther Rabbah 7:8. When his servants told him that Mordechai refused to kneel, Haman remarked that Mordechai's ancestors, Yaakov, Rachel and their children had prostrated themselves before Eisav, Haman's ancestor. Upon hearing Haman's remark, Mordechai replied that he was a descendant of Binyamin, who was born after Yaakov's meeting with Eisav, and who had thus never prostrated himself before Eisav. Alternatively, הימדו דברי מרדכי means "whether Mordechai's words will avail," i.e., if

his actions were successful they would become a precedent for others to follow.

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

A pur was cast. Whoever cast, cast, and the verse does not specify who [cast the pur]. This is an abbreviated verse.
Meaning “lot. ” Scripture explains; and what is the pur? “That is the lot.” He cast lots [to determine] in which month he would succeed.
For a specific day. On which day of the month he would succeed. 4 Haman felt gratified when the lot he cast resulted in the month of Adar, because Moshe died in that month so it was obviously an inopportune time for the Jews. (Maseches Megillah 13b)

Verse 8

And [they do not abide by] his majesty’s bylaws. To pay taxes for the king’s work.
Has nothing to gain. There is no apprehension; i.e., there is no profit by letting the Jews live.

Verse 9

Let it be inscribed that they are to be exterminated. Let letters be written to be sent to the ministers of the provinces to destroy them. 5 Haman had advised Achashveirosh to entice the Jews into behaving sinfully so that they would incur God’s wrath. Following Haman’s advice, Achashveirosh invited the Jews to the royal feast. Using his foresight, Mordechai them not to attend. However, many ignored his warning and joined in the drunken debauchery. The incriminating angel then argued that the Jews were worthy of destruction, and God agreed. (Esther Rabbah 7:13)

Verse 10

The king removed his ring. This represents the granting of any great matter that is required of the king; 6 Otherwise why would the king present the ring to Haman who did not ask for it but rather requested to annihilate the Jews. The king’s removal of his ring was more effective than the forty-eight prophets sent by God to admonish the Jews. They were unable to convince them to repent, but the transfer of the ring to Haman resulted in repentance and three days of fasting. (Maseches Megillah 14a) that the one who has the ring on his hand is the ruler over all the king’s affairs.

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

So that scrolls would be dispatched. And letters shall be sent, estre tramis in O.F. [to be sent], which is of the [same grammatical] form as, "Did he ever fight 7 "?[נִלְחוֹם] Shoftim 11:25. and as "Did I not appear 8 "?[הֲנִגְלֹה] I Shmuel 2:27. and as "will be silenced 9 ".[נִדְמֹה] Hoshea 10:15.
On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month. On the thirteenth day of that month [Adar], which is the twelfth of the months of the year.

Verse 14

The terms. An Aramaic term [meaning] the account of the writ, disreinement in O.F. [text, content, account].
Would become legally binding. The command of the writ which proclaimed that the decree of the king should be issued as a statute.
Displayed conspicuously before all the people. This matter [that they be prepared for this specific date].

Verse 15

And the decree was delivered in Shushan. The place where the king was situated; there the statute was issued on that day, to be poised for the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. Therefore,
The city of Shushan was in confusion. I.e., the Jews therein. 10 The gentiles of Shushan began to harass and taunt the Jews by telling them that they will be killed and their money will be confiscated. (Esther Rabbah 7:25)

Chapter 4

Verse 1

Mordechai was apprized. The Master of Dreams told him 1 He was told by means of a dream and not by רוח הקדש [The Holy Spirit], a higher form of prophecy, because "Shushan was in confusion," and רוח הקדש [The Holy Spirit] dwells only in the midst of joy. Alternatively, Eliyahu the prophet told him. that the celestial beings had consented to this [decree], because they had prostrated themselves to the idol in the days of Nevuchadnetzar, and because they had enjoyed Achashveirosh's feast. 2 See Esther Rabbah 7:13 and Maseches Megillah 12a.

Verse 2

For one could not enter. It is improper to enter the king's gate dressed in sackcloth.

Verse 3

The king's directives and bylaws. When the couriers carrying the letters passed, the edict was given in the city.

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

And of the silver. The explanation of the silver. 3 Mordechai wanted to make it clear to Esther that the king could not be bribed. He therefore provided her with an explanation of the silver, i.e., that Achashveirosh was reluctant to accept the 10,000 silver kikars offered by Haman.

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

You had better not fantasize. [I.e.,] "Do not think," as in, "And it will be, that which I had thought." 4 Bamidbar 33:56. Do not imagine to yourself, do not think to escape in the king's palace on the day of the massacre, and therefore you do not want to endanger yourself now 5 Esther apparently wanted to delay going to the king. Mordechai therefore emphasized to Esther that she must not hesitate, but rather she must seize the moment and go immediately before the king and beg him to spare her people. by taking the risk of coming to the king without permission.

Verse 14

Who knows whether, at this time next year, you will retain your royal position. [I.e.,] "And who knows whether the king will desire you next year, which is the time of the massacre." 6 I.e., who knows whether you will be spared from the decree.
At this time next year. For he was presently in Nisan, and the time of the massacre was in Adar of the next year.
You will retain your royal position. If you will attain the greatness which you now enjoy.

Verse 15

Verse 16

Even though it is unlawful. For it is contrary to the law for one who has not been summoned to enter. And the Midrash Aggadah [explains], "even though it is unlawful," [to signify], "for until now I was coerced [to live with Achashveirosh], but now [I will do so] willingly." 7 Maseches Megillah 15a.
And as I am bereft, so must I be further bereft. [I.e.,] "And just as I have begun to go to destruction [by appearing before Achashveirosh without being summoned], I will go and die." And the Midrash Aggadah [explains], "as I am lost [i.e., orphaned] from my father's house, so will I be lost to you, for from now on, that I am submitting willingly to a heathen, I will be forbidden to you." 8 Because the Torah forbids a wife to her husband if she voluntarily had relations with another man.

Verse 17

Mordechai passed. [I.e., he transgressed] the law 9 Otherwise, וי'עבר מרדכי is apparently superfluous because the text further states that he implemented all her instructions. Alternatively, Mordechai actually went over (=וי'עבר) a bridge. (Maseches Megillah 15a) by fasting on the first festive day of Pesach, for he fasted on the fourteenth, the fifteenth 10 I.e., Pesach. Although the holiday feast is obligatory, Mordechai bypassed the obligation and ordered the fast, using the special authority of the Sanhedrin to suspend such obligations in times of extreme need. (Maseches Megillah 15a), 11 Midrash Esther Rabbah (8:7) is of the opinion that the three day fast was on the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth day of Nisan. and the sixteenth, for the letters were written on the thirteenth day.

Chapter 5

Verse 1

In majesty. Regal clothing. But our Rabbis said that Divine Inspiration enwrapped her, 1 Maseches Megillah 14b. The text should have stated בגדי מלכות [regal clothing]. The inference is that she was cloaked in majesty itself, i.e., in Divine Majesty. as it is says, "And a spirit enwrapped Amasai." 2 I Divrei Hayomim 12:19.

Verse 2

Verse 3

Up until half the empire. A thing that is in the middle and at the halfway mark of the empire; that is, the Beis Hamikdosh, which they started to build in the days of Koresh, and he reneged and commanded to discontinue the work. 3 See Maseches Megillah 15b. And Achashveirosh, who succeeded him, he too discontinued the work. The simple meaning of the verse is, "Even if you request half of the empire from me, I will give it to you."

Verse 4

Let his majesty and Haman attend. Our Rabbis listed many reasons for the matter. 4 Ibid. What did Esther see [i.e., what motivated her] to invite

Haman? In order to make the king and the princes jealous of him, [or], so that the king should think that he desired her and kill him; and many other reasons. 5 Another reason given is that she felt that the Jews would rely on her influence with the king rather than on G. She therefore created the impression that she abandoned them in favor of Haman, so that they would concentrate fully on prayer and penitence. (Megillah 15b)
At the feast. Every feast is called מִשְׁתֶּה on account of the wine, which is the principal feature.

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

And tomorrow I shall comply with his majesty's command. That which you requested of me all these days, i.e., to reveal my nationality and lineage to you.

Verse 9

Verse 10

[Haman] restrained himself. He strengthened himself to control his anger because he was afraid to take revenge without [the king's] permission. וַיִּתְאַפַּק is e se retint in O.F. [and he controlled himself].

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

[This] is meaningless to me. I do not care for all the honor that I have. Whenever, etc. Our Rabbis said that he [Mordechai] would show him [Haman] a deed that he had sold himself [to Mordechai] as a slave because of lack of food when they were appointed—Mordechai and Haman as commanders of troops—in the same war. 6 Maseches Megillah 15a-b.

Chapter 6

Verse 1

The king’s sleep was disturbed. It was a miracle. 1 Otherwise, would Achashveirosh’s sleep be disturbed, particularly on this night, after having partied earlier in the day. Achashveirosh’s sleep was disturbed by a dream in which he saw Haman grabbing a sword to kill him. (Esther Rabbah 10:1) And some [Rabbis] say that he took to heart that Esther had invited Haman; [thinking] perhaps she had set eyes upon him, and he [Haman] would assassinate him. 2 Maseches Megillah 15b.
To bring the book of archives. It is the custom of kings that when their sleep is disturbed, parables and tales are recounted before them until their sleep is restored. Our Rabbis, however, explained that since he took to heart [the matter of] Haman and Esther, he said [to himself], “It is impossible that someone who is my friend should not know their plan and divulge it to me.” He [thought] again and said [to himself], “Perhaps someone did me a favor, and I did not repay him and they do not care about me anymore.” Therefore, “he ordered to bring the book of archives.” 3 Ibid.

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

Let the robe and the horse be handed to a man. But he did not mention the crown, because he saw that the king became jealous when he said that they should place the crown on [another] person’s head.

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

Mordechai then returned. To his sackcloth, and to his fasting. 4 Maseches Megillah 16a. This was the last day of Mordechai's three day fast. (Sifsei Chachomim)
Grief stricken, his head covered [in shame]. Our Rabbis explained this matter in Maseches Megillah. 5 16a; The Rabbis explained that Haman's daughter mistook the horse rider as her father, and the man leading him as Mordechai. Unwittingly, she tossed the contents of a chamber pot on her father. When Haman looked up and she saw that it was her father, she fell off the roof and died. Therefore Haman was "grief stricken" on account of his daughter's death, and "his head covered" by the chamber pot's contents.

Verse 13

Since you have begun to fall, etc. She said, "This nation has been compared to the stars and to the dust. When they descend, they descend to the dust, and when they ascend, they ascend up to the sky and the stars." 6 Maseches Megillah 15a. Zeresh and Haman's advisers forewarned Haman that Mordechai's rise to honor signified the beginning of the rise of the Jews and of Haman's downfall.

Chapter 7

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Let my life be granted me. That I should not be slain on the thirteenth of Adar, for you have issued an edict of massacre upon my people and my heritage.
And my people. Shall be given me in my request, that they should not be slain. Now if you ask, "What does it concern you?" [my answer is] "For how can I see, etc.?" 1 Below 8:6.

Verse 4

For the oppressor has no regard for losses incurred by his majesty. He is not concerned about the king's loss, for if he had sought your benefit, he should have said, "Sell them as slaves and maidservants and take the money," or "keep them now to be your slaves, they and their descendants."

Verse 5

King Achashveirosh spoke. He said to Queen Esther. Wherever it states, "and he said... and he said," twice, it is to be expounded upon. And the Midrashic interpretation of this is: Originally, he would speak to her through an intermediary, but now that he knew that she was of a royal family, he spoke to her personally. 2 Maseches Megillah 16a.

Verse 6

Verse 7

That it would end up. The evil, the hatred, and the vengeance were decided.

Verse 8

Haman had fallen. The angel pushed him. 3 Ibid. The literal translation is "and Haman was falling," meaning that he tried to rise but the angel kept pushing him onto the couch and into a compromising position, which infuriated the king even more.
On the couch upon which Esther reclined. Their custom was to sit at a meal [reclining] on their sides on couches, as it is stated in the beginning of the Book, "couches of gold and silver" 4 Above 1:6. for those who participated in the feast.
Even to overpower the queen. This is an expression of wonder. לִכְבּוֹשׁ [denotes] to subdue with force, as in "and the land is conquered [וְנִכְבְּשָׁה]" 5 Bamidbar 32:22.

Verse 9

Moreover, there is the gallows. He "also" committed another evil, that he prepared the gallows to hang the king's friend, who saved the king from [being] poison[ed].

Chapter 8

Verse 1

How he was related to her. How he was related to her.

Verse 2

Verse 3

To divert the evil decree of Haman. That his evil plan should not be realized.

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

Here, [I have given] Haman's estate, etc. And from now on everyone sees that I favor you, 1 Achashveirosh's reply does not address Esther's

request that he rescind Haman’s evil plans against the Jews. Therefore Rashi explains that the meaning of Achashveirosh’s reply was that, “from now on everyone sees....” (Sifsei Chachomim) and whatever you say, everyone will believe that it comes from me; therefore, you do not have to rescind them, but “write” other letters “as you please.”

Verse 8

It is not rescindable. It is not fitting to rescind it and make the king’s writ invalid.

Verse 9

In its own script. With its characters [i.e., alphabet].
In its own language. The spoken language.

Verse 10

Carried by couriers. The horsemen, whom he [the king] commanded to hurry.
Of the royal breed. A type of camel that runs swiftly.

Verse 11

With their booty to be taken. As was written in the first [letters], but they did not lay their hands upon the spoils, for they showed everyone that this was not done for the sake of money.

Verse 12

Verse 13

The terms. An explicit letter.

Verse 14

Rushed. They hastened them to act swiftly, because they had no time, for they had to get ahead of the first couriers to overtake them.

Verse 15

And a cloak of linen. A wrap of linen, a shawl in which to enwrap oneself.

Verse 16

Verse 17

Converting to Judaism. Converting to Judaism.

Chapter 9

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

And the executive staff. Those who were appointed to conduct the king's affairs.

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

The ten sons of Haman. I saw in Seder Olam: These are the ten who wrote a [false] accusation against Yehudah and Yerusholayim, as it is written in the Book of Ezra: "And during the reign of Achashveirosh, at the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the dwellers of Yehudah and Yerusholayim." 1 Ezra 4:6. And what was the [purpose of the] accusation? To stop those who were coming up from the exile during the days of Koresh, who had started to build the Beis Hamikdosh, and the Cutheans slandered them and stopped them. 2 Seder Olam Rabbah 29. But when Koresh died, and Achashveirosh reigned, and Haman was promoted, he [Haman] saw to it that those in Yerusholayim would not engage in the construction, so they [Haman's ten sons] sent in the name of Achashveirosh to the princes of the other side of the river to stop them [from building].
But they did not lay their hands on the spoils. So that the king should not cast an envious eye on their money. 3 Alternatively, Esther's ancestor, King Shaul had sinned by sparing Agag and by allowing the people to take some of Amoleik's booty (I Shmuel 15:17-29). His misdeed was now rectified by killing Agag's descendants, Haman and his sons, and by "not lay[ing] their hands on the spoils," although they were permitted to do so. This is alluded to in the acrostic [שאול] formed by the first letters of the phrase ובבזה לא שלחו את. (Me'am Lo'ez)

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

And let Haman’s ten sons be hung from a gallows. Those who were slain.

Verse 14

The decree was proclaimed. A statute was decreed by the king.

Verse 15

Verse 16

Verse 17

Verse 18

Verse 19

Unwalled. Who do not reside in walled cities, [celebrate] on the fourteenth, and those who reside in walled cities [celebrate] on the fifteenth, like Shushan; and [these cities] must have been surrounded [by walls] since the days Yehoshua Bin Nun. So did our Rabbis expound and learn. 4 Maseches Megillah 2b. Shushan which was without a wall in the time of Yehoshua was accorded special status “because the miracle was performed there.”
Sending. This מִשְׁלֹחַ is a noun like מִשְׁמָר [guarding] 5 Nechemyah 12:24. and מִשְׁמָע [hearing], 6 Yeshayah 11:3. therefore the shin is vowelized softly [without a dagesh].

Verse 20

Mordechai wrote. This scroll [of Esther], as it is [i.e., in its present state]. 7 To ensure the continued annual celebration of the Purim festival.

Verse 21

Verse 22

Verse 23

Verse 24

For Haman, the son of Hamdasa. Devised to terrify them and destroy them.

Verse 25

But when she came. [When] Esther [came] to the king to appeal to him.
He directed in writing. The king stated orally and commanded to write letters that his [Haman's] wicked scheme should return upon his own head.

Verse 26

For this reason... because of all that is narrated in this letter. These days were designated, and therefore it [the Megillah] was written for the future generations to know.
Why they saw fit. Those who did these deeds, that they did them.
And what happened to them as a result. What did Achashveirosh see that he used the sacred vessels, "and what happened to them as a result," that Satan came and danced among them and slew Vashti. What did Haman see that he became jealous of Mordechai, "and what happened to him as a result," that they hanged him and his sons. What did Mordechai see that he did not kneel or prostate himself, and what did Esther see that she invited Haman? 8 Maseches Megillah 19a.

Verse 27

Anyone associated with them. Proselytes who are destined to convert to Judaism. 9 They too were affected by Haman's decree because he tried to destroy the nation they would embrace at a future time.
As written. That the Scroll [of Esther] should be written in the Ashuri script. 10 Ibid.

Verse 28

Shall be recalled. With the reading of the Scroll [of Esther]. 11 Talmud Yerushalmi Megillah 1:5.
And observed. [As days of] feasting 12 Ibid. and rejoicing and a holiday, to give portions [of food to friends] and gifts [to the poor].
By every family. Gathers together and feast and drink together; and so they took upon themselves that the days of Purim would not be revoked. 13 Midrash Mishlei 9.
Their memory. The reading of the Scroll [of Esther].
Should not depart. The Aramaic translation of 14 There seems to be an error in Rashi's text because Targum renders לא יסוף as לא ישתיצי. The suggested correct text omits the first two words "תרגום שלְ" [=the Aramaic translation of] from Rashi's text. (Sifsei Chachomim) יִתֹּם [= will end], for the Targum of 15 תֹּם עַד Bamidbar 32:13. is עַד דְּסָף [until it ended]. But it is impossible to say that it [יָסוּף] is derived from the same root as "lest you perish 16 "[תִּסָּפֶה] Bereishis 19:17. or from the same root as "I may perish [אֶסָּפֶה] one day," 17 I Shmuel 27:1. for if it were so, Scripture should have written לֹא יִסָּפֶה מִזַּרְעָם.

Verse 29

With all the power [of their position]. The power of the miracle of Achashveirosh, 18 Maseches Megillah 19a. of Haman, of Mordechai and of Esther. 19 Each one was instrumental in the miracle.
A second time. In the second year they again sent letters that they should celebrate Purim.

Verse 30

Verse 31

Verse 32

On the basis of Esther’s request [these Purim matters] were perpetuated, etc. Esther requested of the Sages of the generation to commemorate her and to write this book with the rest of the Scriptures, and that is the meaning of “and inscribed in the book.” 20 Maseches Megillah 7a.

Chapter 10

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

By most of his brethren. By not by all his brethren, this teaches us that part of the Sanhedrin separated from him because he became close to the monarchy and neglected his studies. 1 Maseches Megillah 16b and see Rashi there.
Of all his descendants. This refers back to “of his people,” i.e., to all the seed of his people.